DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 352 142 PS 020 917

TITLE	Illinois Report Card '92.
INSTITUTION	Voices for Illinois Children, Chicago.
PUB DATE	92
NOTE	13p.
PUB TYPE	Statistical Data (110) -- Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Adolescents; Child Health; *Childhood Needs; *Children; *Child Welfare; Disadvantaged Youth; Early Childhood Education; Educational Needs; Elementary Secondary Education; Foster Care; Poverty; State Surveys; *Well Being
IDENTIFIERS	*Counties; *Illinois; State Responsibility

ABSTRACT

Developed by Voices for Illinois Children, a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy group that addresses problems faced by Illinois children and their families, this booklet evaluates in a report card format the condition of Illinois children in the areas of education, health, special needs, and economic level. Sections of the booklet describing each of these areas provide a brief summary of the specific conditions related to the area, a few facts about the conditions in various Illinois counties, and suggestions for improvement. The report concludes that Illinois is failing to provide adequate services to its children. The booklet summarizes a complete briefing book entitled "Illinois Kids Count: A Snapshot of Our Future," which contains in-depth statewide data as well as detailed information about children in each county. (MM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

Illinois

Report Card '92

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this doc u ment do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Regina McGraw
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

ED352142

PS 020912

The State of Our Children	
Education	C-
Health	D+
Special Needs	D-
Economic Condition	F
Overall Grade	D-

2 BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Education

Children today face tougher problems than their parents did - drugs, alcohol abuse, poverty. School is the place we count on to teach them how to deal with the hard lessons of life. We also count on the schools to develop an educated work force. Our future prosperity is directly linked to how well we educate our children today.

85% of Illinois counties do not spend enough money to provide an adequate education for their students.

Snapshot of the state

- Illinois ranks 41 out of 50 states in the percent increase in state revenue for kindergarten through 12th grade education in the last ten years. Ohio, Indiana, and Iowa rank in the top ten.
- Fewer of our young people are graduating from high school. 18 states have a better rate of high school graduation.
- Less than half of the eligible young children who would benefit from preschool receive these services, due to lack of funding.

C-

County facts

- Of the 27 counties that had child poverty rates of more than 20% in 1990, only 9 counties had more than 100 children enrolled in state-funded preschool.
- 18 counties with a child poverty rate of more than 20% had less than 100 children enrolled in state-funded preschool.
- County statistics can obscure local facts on education spending. For example, in LaSalle County, the Seneca Elementary School District generated $6,676 in local revenue and state and federal aid per pupil and the Walthan School District generated only $2,831.

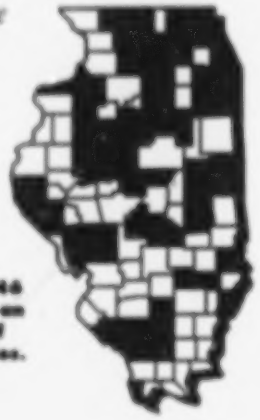
Kids first agenda

Illinois must increase its investment in high quality public education. A constitutional amendment proposed to voters in the November 3, 1992 general election provides a framework for an educational system that would prepare students for a successful and productive life.

High quality early childhood education is the foundation for later excellence. Illinois must increase funding for state-funded preschool and coordinate its Head Start and state-funded programs until every eligible child is enrolled.

Health

Prevention builds healthy children. Prenatal care saves babies' lives, reduces the number of babies with health problems, and saves money. Babies, toddlers, and young children need preventive health care to reduce health problems later in life. Ill health can also reduce children's ability to take advantage of their schooling.



In the last 10 years, 46 counties experienced an increase in the rate of low birth weight babies.

Snapshot of the state

- There was a 5% increase in the number of low birth weight babies in the past ten years.
- 38 states have a better rate of low birth weight babies.
- Illinois ranks 46th worst in the nation for infant mortality, despite a 27% decrease during the 1980s. The mortality rate for African American infants is twice that for white infants.
- 14.3 percent of Illinois children lack health insurance.
- Only half of all eligible children receive the federally funded Women, Infants and Children Special Supplemental Food Program (WIC).

D+

County facts

- In the past 10 years, 37 counties experienced an increase in the percent of mothers who did not receive early prenatal care.
- In 1990, St. Clair County had a rate of 13.63 infant deaths per 1,000 live births while McHenry County had a rate of 6.5.
- Clark, Edgar, Coles, Macon, and Moultrie Counties have a high percentage of mothers not receiving early prenatal care.
- 54 counties had an increase in the rate of low birth weight babies. Low birth weight babies are 40 times more likely to have health difficulties than other babies.
- 24 counties had a decrease in the rate of low birth rate babies.

Kids First Agenda

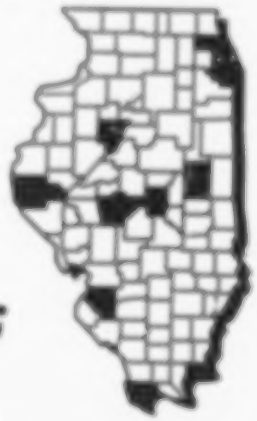
Illinois should provide prenatal care and other basic health services to low and moderate income women and children who are not covered by private health insurance or Medicaid.

Illinois must expand its participation in the WIC food supplement program to reach the 50% of eligible mothers and infants who cannot now participate.

All Illinois infants and toddlers should receive appropriate immunizations.

Special Needs

Foster children suffer the combined stress of neglect or abuse in their families of origin, the removal from home, the placement in someone else's home, and the absence of guarantees about their future. Too many move from foster home to foster home and end up as homeless teenagers.



11 counties have placement rates above the Illinois average of 40 per 10,000.

Snapshot of the state

- From 1985 to 1990, the number of children living in foster care in Illinois has increased by 54%.
- The number of white children entering substitute care has decreased slightly, the number of African American children has more than doubled, and the number of Hispanic children has remained about the same.
- Approximately 47% of all children entering foster care are under 5 years old.

D-

County facts

- In 20 counties more than 50 children out of every 10,000 are living in foster homes.
- Macon, Sangamon, Adams, and Champaign Counties have high placement rates.
- 60% of the counties which have higher than average placement rates are located in central Illinois.

Early intervention programs for young children with delays in speech, physical ability, or thinking skills have a proven record of enhancing these children's development.

Only 14% of the 36,000 children statewide from birth to age three who need help because of serious developmental delays get the early intervention services they need.

The state should provide adequate funding for phasing in the full implementation of early intervention services over 3 years.

Kids First Agenda

Illinois should support natural families through such mechanisms as the Family Preservation mandate.

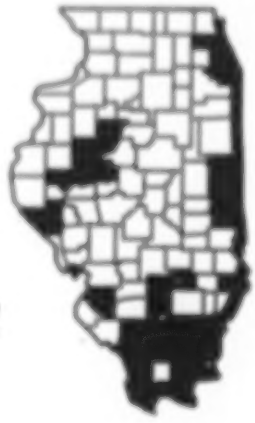
Illinois must provide health care, education, and support for foster children. The state should improve its recruitment and training of foster parents, and give them the support they need.

The Department of Children and Family Service (DCFS) should improve the training, supervision and support of caseworkers.

Illinois should provide preventive health and education services, as well as opportunities for developing parenting skills.

Economic Condition

Children who grow up in poverty households are less likely to get adequate food and health care than other children and are less likely to stay in school. The child poverty rate is a key indicator of the condition of children, and an indicator of children who will need extra help.



In 37 counties in Illinois, at least 1 out of 5 children is growing up in poverty.

Snapshot of the state

- The number of poor children who are white is nearly equal to the number of African American poor children.
- While the median income for families with children stayed about the same from 1980 to 1990, the income of the bottom fifth of families declined ten percent. Young families and families whose parents did not have a college education were hit hardest.
- Despite the fact that Illinois enjoys the 12th highest per capita income in the country, it has more children in poverty than 36 other states.

F

County facts

- The child poverty rate increased by more than 50% in 34 counties. 27 of these counties are rural.
- The poverty rate increased in 88 counties in the 1980s.
- 485,706 children in Illinois are growing up in poverty.
- In Lawrence, Perry, and Stark Counties the child poverty rate increased by more than 100% during the last decade.
- More than two-thirds of the counties where more than 20% of all children are poor are located in Southern Illinois.
- 19 counties have a higher percentage of poor children than Cook County.

Kids First Agenda

Illinois should offer a state earned income credit and ease the tax burden so poor working families can keep more of what they earn.

All employers and state and local governments should provide information about the federal Earned Income Tax Credit that provides up to $2,000 a year for working families with dependent children.

Welfare must become a bridge of opportunity by providing families with job skills, health care, child care, and education. Illinois should pursue federal and state policy changes that allow welfare recipients to keep a larger portion of their welfare grants during a transition period if they take low-wage jobs.

Overall Grade

Illinois is failing to provide adequate services to its 3.3 million children. Unfortunately for them and for our future, the 1980s were not a good time for Illinois children.

This Report Card '92 is an attempt to bring home the realities about children's lives. The figures show the effects of a decade of policies that have undermined the well-being of children.

It is simply not true that nothing works. Prenatal care saves babies' lives, reduces the number of babies with problems, and saves money. Preschool programs prepare young children to do well in their elementary school education.

Voices for Illinois Children

Voices for Illinois Children champions the full development of every child in Illinois. Special emphasis is placed on those children who live in poverty or are vulnerable because of discrimination, ill health, or family stress.

Voices is a non-profit, non-partisan, advocacy group that addresses problems faced by Illinois children and their families. Through research, public education, and coalition building, Voices is generating support from civic, business and community leaders for cost-effective and practical proposals to improve the lives of Illinois' children. Our *Kids First Agenda* provides a blueprint for positive steps Illinois can take to increase opportunities for children and families.

D-

Homework Assignment

1. Share yourself — Every child can benefit from time spent with a caring adult.

2. Learn the facts — Find out what your community can do to improve children's lives. Examine the positions of your candidates for political office on children's issues.

3. Help spread the word — Write a letter to your local newspaper about children's issues. Speak out about children's needs in your community.

4. Join Voices for Illinois Children's Kids First Action Network.

5. Make a commitment — There are no quick fixes. Remember the adage that it takes a whole community to raise a child.

This booklet is a summary of a complete briefing book entitled *Illinois Kids Count: A Snapshot of Our Future*, which contains in-depth statewide data as well as detailed information about children in each county. The *Kids Count* project is funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and is a joint project of the Casey Foundation and the Center for Social Policy. This publication was made possible in part by a grant from Kraft General Foods. The data for this report was compiled by Voices for Illinois Children. A portion of the data was supplied by the Chapin Hall Center for Children. For more information, or for additional copies of this brochure, call VIC at 312-456-0600.

© 1992, Voices for Illinois Children. Permission to copy, disseminate, or otherwise use this work is normally granted as long as ownership is properly attributed.

208 South LaSalle Street
Suite 1580
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Chicago, IL
Permit No. 2646